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ABSTRACT

This book asks teachers to examine their beliefs about language, the beliefs of other educators, and the implications of those beliefs for English classes, where the primary goal is to foster language development through reading, writing, listening, and speaking. It is offered as a catalyst to the ongoing process of research and reflection that is an essential part of good teaching. As discussed in the book, the 4 perspectives on language--as artifact, as development, as expression, as social construct--are quite different from each other, although they overlap in some places; some ideas and techniques are applicable to more than one perspective. Included are examples of the way a teacher might go about implementing each approach at different levels and in different kinds of classrooms. The book also addresses the history of teaching English and the effect that history has on present-day teaching; the personal and social factors essential to understand individual students and particular classrooms; the various methods of evaluation English teachers can use; and the social forces that impinge upon the English classroom. Chapters in the book are: (1) Why Teach English?; (2) Reading Kids and Classrooms; (3) Becoming an English Teacher: Theory into Practice; (4) Language as Artifact; (5) Language as Development; (6) Language as Expression; (7) Language as Social Construct; (8) Exploring and Evaluating the Approaches; (9) Evaluation; and (10) The Social Dimensions of Schooling. (NKA)

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